



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

December 30, 2014

The Honorable Jean Wilson
Chair
ConnectME Authority
78 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0078

Dear Chair Wilson,

I am writing to urge the ConnectME Authority to accelerate efforts to deploy high speed broadband service in Maine.

High speed internet is critical to moving Maine forward. It has become increasingly evident that many industries simply cannot prosper in our state without this service. At a time when businesses and customers are looking to utilize video and other streaming services, limited or very basic internet service can be a barrier to attracting business to our state or moving our existing employers into a digital economy.

Specifically, ConnectME should adopt a definition of "unserved" to those areas without access to broadband download and upload speeds of 10 Mbps. Adoption of this new, higher standard will help ensure that the limited state funding currently available to support the expansion of broadband will be used to support the next generation of network technology, instead of the last.

The proposed definition of a minimum of 10 Mbps would be a first step and is consistent with the basic broadband speeds currently available in markets around the country. Recently the Federal Communications Commission required those companies receiving federal subsidies for broadband to provide at least 10 Mbps down. To remain competitive and to ensure that our businesses can participate in the digital marketplace, Maine should do the same.

In particular I support the adoption, for the first time, of a minimum upload speed. This appropriately recognizes that a symmetrical connection, with upload speeds that match download speeds, is essential to allowing homes and businesses in rural Maine to fully participate in the modern internet. Symmetrical connections are vital to businesses that increasingly rely on cloud-based services, for students and educators to participate in virtual classrooms, and to doctors and patients to communicate using the next generation of telemedicine services.



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I realize that this alone will not move Maine's telecommunications network forward. However, a robust, advanced telecommunications network is essential to attracting, creating and growing businesses that will provide the jobs to Mainers, especially for those in rural parts of the state, and this would be a critical first step.

I thank you for your efforts and look forward to advancing Maine's telecommunications network with you in the coming years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul R. LePage". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "P".

Paul R. LePage
Governor

Cc: Members of the ConnectME Authority
Phil Lindley, Executive Director, ConnectME